

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Willamalane Park and Recreation District (WPRD) manages approximately 680 acres of land in 31 parks and open spaces and two undeveloped properties. The District provides a variety of recreational facilities and a wide range of services, including aquatics, community athletics, special events, specialized recreation, and adult and senior programs. District parks, recreation facilities, and services are important community resources. The District contributes to the quality of life in Springfield, enhancing the lives of the people who live there.

The population within the Willamalane Park and Recreation District is expected to grow by more than 25,000 people in the next 20 years. Demographic trends project that an overall increase in parks, facilities, and services will be needed. To identify future needs for parks, open space, recreation facilities, programs, and services, the District began a comprehensive planning process in December 2001. Over 750 residents participated in the planning process.

This comprehensive planning process included three phases that each involved significant community input:

- Determining needs;
- Developing the Plan; and
- Adopting the Plan.

Throughout the planning process, a Project Management Team, Citizen Advisory Committee, and Technical Advisory Committee provided vision, direction, and oversight by identifying key issues to be addressed in the Plan, reviewing work products, and encouraging resident participation.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

The Plan consists of six key elements, which are identified in Chapter 2:

- *Core values* or the values that all services are based upon;
- A *vision* for the Willamalane's Park and Recreation District that describes its preferred future;
- A *mission* that describes the business of Willamalane Park and Recreation District;
- *Goals* that describe the outcomes to be produced by implementing the Comprehensive Plan;
- *Strategies and actions* that describe how Willamalane Park and Recreation District will achieve its vision; and
- *Performance measures* that measure success at achieving this vision.

The Comprehensive Plan provides a specific, community-supported plan for the future of the District's parks, open space, recreation facilities, programs, and services.

Core Values

Core values are the qualities most valued by Willamalane Park and Recreation District. These qualities will guide all services that WPRD provides.



Living History activities at Dorris Ranch

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The values embodied in the goals and strategies for Willamalane's parks, open space, recreation facilities, programs, and services are:

- Affordability
- Accessibility
- People
- Play
- Teamwork
- Community
- Personal Growth
- Partnerships
- Innovation
- Excellence
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Environment
- Inclusiveness
- Stewardship

Vision

Willamalane Park and Recreation District's values and aspirations for the future have been guiding forces for the Comprehensive Plan. The District's vision is summarized as follows:

We enhance quality of life in our community through people, parks, and programs.

Mission

The mission of Willamalane Park and Recreation District is:

To provide exceptional park and recreation services that enhance the livability of our community and the lives of the people we serve.



Willamalane Adult Activity Center patrons

Goals

Goals provide focus and direction to the Comprehensive Plan. Eleven goals emerged during the comprehensive planning process. These goals are:

- Provide diverse park and recreation opportunities;
- Provide opportunities to enjoy nature;
- Support youth development;
- Support seniors and people with disabilities;
- Provide enriching family experiences;
- Promote well-being, health and wellness;
- Provide safe parks, recreation facilities and programs;
- Support community economic development;
- Strengthen and develop community partnerships;
- Preserve the natural environment; and
- Increase cultural understanding.

HIGHLIGHTS OF IMPROVEMENTS

An overview of key Plan improvements, provided in Chapter 3, include the following:

- *Partnerships* – Willamalane recognizes the importance of community partnerships and collaborations in maximizing resources and delivering the greatest benefit to the community. The District is an important partner in TEAM Springfield, a cooperative effort between the City of Springfield, School District 19, Willamalane, and the Springfield Utility Board. The District also collaborates with local and regional planners and providers and with non-profit organizations to reach all members of our community.
- *School District/Willamalane Collaboration* – Willamalane Park and Recreation District relies on its partnership with School District 19 to meet community park and recreation needs. In the Comprehensive Plan, Willamalane proposes to expand these collaborations. One example is increasing the number of school/park projects to meet neighborhood park needs. Other school/park sites will serve as community parks and sports parks. WPRD will work with the School District on a site-by-site basis to explore the possibilities of joint use, shared maintenance, and joint master planning in order to maximize recreation opportunities. Also, WPRD will develop future school sites to maximize recreational opportunities.
- *Park Development* – According to the results of the Community Needs Assessment, over 500 acres of additional parkland will be needed to serve District residents by 2022. A variety of park types will be provided. Significant projects to be implemented

in the next 12 years are described in the Capital Improvement Plan in Chapter 5.

- *Community Center* – Developing a multiuse community center is one of the top five projects needed in Springfield, according to the results of the Community Needs Assessment. To create a focal point for community pride and a site for expanded recreation programs, Willamalane proposes to develop a new community center no later than 2015. The new community center will replace the Memorial Building.
- *Natural Areas, Linear Parks, and Trails* – Willamalane has a lower inventory of natural-area parks than many other jurisdictions in the state. To meet District goals of providing opportunities to enjoy nature and preserve the natural environment, the District proposes to expand natural-area parks, linear parks, and trails. A complete list of projects that will be implemented during the first 12 years of the Plan is provided in Chapter 5.



Volunteers at Eastgate Woodlands

- *Park and Facility Rehabilitation* – Willamalane recognizes the importance of maintaining existing recreation resources and facilities. Many of the District's parks and major facilities are in need of long term improvement plans to effectively serve the community in the future. Major issues for rehabilitation include:

- Renovations to comply with ADAAG;
- Improvements to meet current safety guidelines; and
- New site master plans for aging parks.

- *Recreation Services Plan* – To achieve its vision of the future, Willamalane will strive to offer recreation programs and services that respond to District needs, strengthen families and the community, and encourage healthy lifestyles. A well-designed Recreation Services plan will assure that these benefits are provided. The plan will reflect the following important concepts:

- Partnerships;
- Youth development;
- Youth employment and job training;
- A sense of community;
- Diversity and changing trends; and
- Opportunities to enjoy nature and the outdoors.

- *Park Maintenance and Operations* – Willamalane's park and facility maintenance staff will play an important role in implementing many of the Comprehensive Plan improvements highlighted in Chapter 3. To meet these growing responsibilities and still be able to

maintain the current level of park and facility maintenance, the ratio of maintenance staff to park acres must be maintained or expanded. Recommendations for expanding maintenance funding are discussed in Chapter 5.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Strategies are the means to achieve the District's vision for parks, open space, recreation facilities, programs, and services. In Chapter 4, strategies were developed in six categories:

- *Parks and Open Space*

Provide parks, open spaces, river access, and pathways, while respecting private property rights.

- *Community Recreation and Support Facilities*

Provide community recreation and support facilities that facilitate a wide variety of activities, create community gathering places, and enhance community pride.



Lively Park Swim Center

▪ *Rehabilitation*

Upgrade and revitalize existing parks and recreation facilities to provide recreation opportunities, protect recreation resources, improve the environment, enhance user safety, and improve accessibility for people with disabilities.

▪ *Park and Facility Operations*

Manage park, open space, and community facilities to promote recreation, user safety, and sustainable environmental practices; and to protect public investment.

▪ *Recreation Programs and Services*

Offer recreation programs and services that respond to residents' needs, strengthen families and the community, and encourage healthy lifestyles.

▪ *Management and Communication*

Manage the District in a sound, responsible manner that emphasizes effective stewardship of public resources, partnerships and joint ventures, and expanded staff and community involvement.

Each strategy category includes a corresponding list of policies that will be implemented to achieve the District's vision for the future. Tables listing actions for each strategy area are included in Chapter 4. These action tables represent Willamalane's 20-year Comprehensive Plan.

Willamalane's 20-year Comprehensive Plan is illustrated in Map 2 (Existing and Proposed Park and Recreation Resources) and Map 3 (Existing, Planned, and Proposed Multiuse Paths and Bikeways), which are included in this chapter. These maps do not include special projects or rehabilitation of existing parks and facilities.



All smiles at the Children's Celebration

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND OPERATIONS PLAN

An overview of the financing strategy for implementing the recommended strategies and actions is included in Chapter 5. The total capital costs for the first two phases of the proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) are estimated at \$22.9 million, while the overall cost of implementing all projects identified in the 20-year Comprehensive Plan will exceed \$50 million. At the same time, revenues (without significant additional revenue sources) would total approximately \$22.6 million, leaving a potential capital funding shortfall of \$27.4 million over the 20-year planning horizon.

To meet this shortfall, a variety of potential funding sources are considered in the plan, including a serial levy, general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, certificates of participation, and public and private grants, among others.

Chapter 5 also describes new operational and maintenance costs resulting from improvements recommended in the Plan. These additional costs, averaged annually, are estimated at \$137,300 at

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the end of Phase 1, and \$701,600 at the end of Phase 2.

Options for meeting these additional costs include, asking voters to approve a levy for park operations, securing additional grants and donations, improving operating efficiency, and using more volunteers, among others.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

To assess progress in Plan implementation, performance measures were developed. Each measure is linked to one of the goals described in Chapter 2. In addition to providing feedback on the success of this plan, the collected data will guide future planning decisions. Performance measures are described in Chapter 6.



Willamalane league sports (Bobby Quick)